

David Smaill House
313 W. Ann St.
Carson City
Nevada

HABS NO. NEV-13-19 HABS
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

DAVID SMAILL HOUSE

HABS No. NEV-13-19

Location: 313 West Ann Street (NW corner West Ann and North Division Streets), Carson City, Nevada

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Felix Sarcinella

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Sarcinella

Present Use: Dwelling

Statement of Significance: This is a representative small house of the late 19th century, typical of those erected by Carson City's early settlers. Architecturally, it is noteworthy for its elaborate ornamental trim.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1870's. The construction date of the house is not definitely known, but several references tend to place it in the mid 1870's.

Moses Dow, whose name has been given as the builder, did own the property from 1863 to 1873. However, Dow is not listed in the several directories of the period as living at this address. In 1873, Dow sold the property for \$100 less than his purchase price ten years earlier, which might indicate that the economy was in a depression, that he was a poor businessman, or that he had not made any improvements, such as building a house on the property during his time as owner.

From 1873 to 1876 the property was owned by Charles H. Jones. It was during this time that the 1875 Birds Eye view of Carson City, which shows no building on the lot, was published. Until 1876, the property on which the house was built (the west half of lots 9 and 10 of Block 11 of Curry's Division of Carson City) was part of a large parcel. In 1876, however, Jones divided the tract by selling the west half of lots 9 and 10 separately from the rest.

In July, 1876 the property was bought by Mrs. David Smaill for \$255.00. In October, 1877 it was sold by Mr. and Mrs. Smaill for \$1,600.00. This price increase in little over

a year would seem to indicate that a substantial improvement had been made on the property during that time. Further, when the property changed hands in 1882, after interim ownership by the Johnson and Bigler families, it was described as "the property known as the Smail property." It would seem, then, that 1876, in light of the present state of investigation, would be a strong contender for the year in which the house was erected.

2. Architect: none known
3. Original and subsequent owners: The house is located on the western portion of lots 9 and 10 of Block 11 of Curry's Division of Carson City. (A. Curry, the founder of Carson City, was one of the four original purchasers in 1858 of the Eagle Ranch, upon which the city was platted (see HABS NEV-13-13). The following references tracing the title of these lots are found in the Ormsby County, Nevada Deed Books.
 - 1860 Deed August 20, 1860, recorded in Book 1, page 165. A. Curry of Carson City, Utah Territory sold all of Block 11 of Curry's addition to E.E. Edson for \$500.00.
 - 1862 Deed June 6, 1862, recorded in Book 1, page 267. Eugene E. Edson sold to Frank Perkins of Carson City, Ormsby County, Nevada Territory lots 4, 5, 9 and 10 in Block 11 of Curry's addition. Perkins paid \$600.00.
 - 1863 Deed October 19, 1863, recorded in Book 8, page 248. Frank Perkins sold lots 4, 5, 9 and 10 in Block 11 to Mrs. M.B. Dow for \$600.00.
 - 1873 Deed May 13, 1873, recorded in Book 15, page 185. Moses Dow sold lots 4, 5, 9 and 10 in Block 11 to Charles Henry Jones for \$500.00.
 - 1876 Deed July 2, 1876 recorded in Book 18, page 83. Charles M. Jones and wife sold one half of lots 9 and 10 (being the west half, 40 feet on Ann Street and 68 feet on Division Street) to Mrs. David Smail for \$225.00.
 - 1877 Deed October 31, 1877 recorded in Book 18, page 517. David A. Smail and Rachel E. Smail sold the west half of lots 9 and 10 in Block 11 to W.A. Johnson of Alpine County, California for \$1,600.00.

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- 1881 Deed March 12, 1881, recorded in Book 22, page 44. William A. Johnson of the Town of Bodie, Mono County, California sold the west half of lots 9 and 10 in Block 11 to James Bigler of Carson City for \$525.
- 1882 Deed, August 19, 1882, recorded in Book 22, page 243. James R. Bigler and Louisa Bigler, his wife, of Oakland, California sold the west half of lots 9 and 10 to Russell Fitton for \$400; "the same subscribing the property known as the Smail property."
- 1890 Deed March 22, 1890 recorded in Book 25, page 57. Russell and Annie Fitton sold to A. Livingston the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10.
- 1908 Deed, October 28, 1908 recorded in Book 36, page 30. A. Livingston deeded to May Livingston for \$1.00 the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10.
- 1943 Deed, May 12, 1943, recorded in Book 48, page 367. May Livingston, widow, of San Francisco, sold to Liva B. McCabe the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10 for \$10.00.
- 1949 Deed February 25, 1949 recorded in Book 55, page 375. Liva B. McCabe, widow, sold joint tenancy of west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10 to Thomas O. McCabe for \$10.00.
- 1956 Deed August 8, 1956, recorded in Book 71, page 136. Liva B. McCabe and Thomas O. McCabe and Jessie Agnes McCabe (the latter two husband and wife) deeded the west 60 feet of lots 9 and 10 to Margaret E. Coe. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. Sarcinella, obtained the property from Margaret Coe in 1966.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: none known
5. Alterations and additions: Aside from the expected changes in kitchen and bathroom facilities, there has been little alteration of the basic fabric. An 1885 photograph of the house, reproduced in the HABS records, shows additional ornamental trim on the porch which has since disappeared. The present owners have installed a brick hearth and fireplace in the southeast corner of the dining room.
- B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building:
- Moses B. Dow, whose name has been associated with the house, was a blacksmith and wagon maker, whose shop was located on N. Carson

Street between Robinson and Spear Streets. In 1873, his residence was at the corner of Ormsby and Washington Streets. In 1882 the property was bought by Russell Fitton, who had come to Carson City from Ireland in 1875. Fitton was a machinist in the railroad shops of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: The 1875 "Birds Eye View of Carson City," drawn by Augustus Koch and published by Britton, Rey, and Co. of San Francisco, significantly does not show the house (see item A-1 above).

The earliest known view of the house is a photograph taken in 1885, reproduced in the HABS records. Ann Donehue Fitton, wife of Russell Fitton, is shown in it with two of their children, Martha on the left and Marion on the right.

2. Bibliography:

Ormsby County, Nevada, Deed Books.

Prepared by: S. Allen Chambers, Jr.
Architectural Historian
National Park Service
December, 1972

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: A good representative small house of the late 19th century with interesting ornamental wooden details, largely in its original state.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Detailed description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: approximately 24 ft. (three bays) by 49 feet (five bays). One story; slightly modified rectangular shape.
2. Foundations: low; rubble masonry.
3. Wall Construction, finish: Frame, covered with novelty siding, seven-inch exposure, corner boards five inches wide. Painted; no indication of original color.

4. Porches: There is a small entrance porch, one by two bays, at the east part of the north front. The columns consist of two square pieces between which there is fretted ornament. They have moulded capitals above which there are pierced ornamental brackets. A low railing is also pierced in an ornamental design. The floor consists of narrow matched boards. This porch and the adjoining bay windows are covered by a hip roof of low pitch.

On the west side toward the south end there is a small square porch serving to shelter a secondary entrance. It has square posts with chamfered corners, moulded capitals, and simple bracket-like tracery work above the capitals.

At the south (rear) end there is a small recessed porch.

5. Chimneys: There is a small brick chimney on the ridge near the south end of the main portion of the house.
6. Openings - Doorways: The main entrance is at the center of the north front. The opening has plain trim. There is a single door with four moulded panels, the upper panels having semicircular heads. Above it there is a rectangular glazed transom.

There is a secondary entrance on the west side, and there are two entrances through the rear porch--one at each end of the porch.

- b. windows: Windows are rectangular and have plain trim. Sash are double hung, two lights above two lights. Windows on the north front are double.

At the west part of the north front there is a bay window rectangular in plan and projecting about five feet (the same as the depth of the entrance porch). Below the window openings there are moulded panels.

In the north gable there is a round ventilating opening, filled with fan louvers.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, Covering: The main part of the house and its main southern part have gable roofs. The main (northern) part is covered with wooden shingles in somewhat weathered condition, and the remainder with composition shingles.

- b. Cornice: There is a box cornice with bed moulding and cymatium, below which there is a plain frieze. Along the sides of the house the soffit slopes according to the slope of the roof. At the north gable there are pierced ornamental barge boards, scalloped along the lower edge. At the apex of the gable there is an ornamental pendant.
- c. There are no dormers.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor Plan: Along the east side there are, beginning at the north front, an entrance porch and three bedrooms (the southern-most projects slightly on the east; it is now used as a utility room). Between the middle and south bedrooms there is a bathroom. Along the west side there are a living room, dining room and kitchen. Between the north bedroom and the living room there is a small entrance vestibule.
- 2. Flooring: All rooms have modern floor covering.
- 3. Wall and Ceiling Finish: Walls and ceilings are plastered and covered with wallpaper. The kitchen has a wainscot of vertical matched and beaded boards, painted. Walls generally have a moulded wooden base, painted.
- 4. Doorways and Doors: Door openings are rectangular; typical doors have four moulded panels and are hung on two butts.

Between the living and dining rooms there is a wide rectangular opening, whose height has been lowered somewhat.

- 5. Trim: Door and window openings in the four front rooms and entrance vestibule have architrave trim. In the kitchen there is plain trim. Some rooms have ornamental plaster centerpieces in the ceiling.
- 6. Mechanical equipment: In the entrance hall there is an old gas lighting fixture suspended from the ceiling. It is cylindrical in shape and the glass is etched. It has been electrified.

The water closet has a round water tank of unusual form; this may date from around 1915.

D. Site and Surroundings:

The house located at the southeast corner of Ann and Division

Streets, facing north to Ann St. The terrain is level, blocks are small, and lots are small-typical in Carson City. An 1885 photograph shows trees along the north and west sides, and a wooden picket fence with cased posts. At present there is a picket fence which is a more recent replacement.

Southeast of the house, and close to it, there is an L-shaped wooden gable-roofed garage, of uncertain date.

Prepared by: Harley J. McKee
Supervisory Architect
National Park Service
August 16, 1972

PART III. Project Information

These records are part of the documentation made during the latter half of 1972 and the summer of 1973 in a project undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Nevada State Park System to record structures in Carson City and nearby areas.

The project was under the general supervision of John Poppeliers, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey. Eric R. Cronkhite, Administrator, Nevada State Park System, and Mrs. Marshall Humphreys of the Nevada Landmarks Society assisted the HABS recorders in Nevada. Professor Harley J. McKee, Supervisory Architect, National Park Service, selected the subjects and provided architectural data for the sixteen Carson City structures which were recorded. Historical documentation for these buildings was prepared by S. Allen Chambers, Jr., Architectural Historian, Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor for the 1973 Nevada Summer Team, which produced the measured drawings, was Robert L. Hartwig of Harvard University. Student assistant architects were John T. M. Creery (University of Utah), Robert P. Mizell (University of Florida), and Jack W. Schafer (University of Cincinnati). Photographs were made by Aaron A. Gallup of Sacramento, California.